

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Board Meeting
August 20, 2020

Item C-1-c

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, August 20, 2020 at 6:02 PM. This meeting was held by electronic communications means due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, using Microsoft Teams.¹

Present were:

Monique O’Grady, Chair
Barbara Kanninen, Vice Chair
Reid Goldstein, Member
Tannia Talento, Member
Nancy Van Doren, Member
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
Raj Adusumilli, Assistant Superintendent, Information Services
Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relations
John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Cintia Johnson, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Bridget Loft, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Dan Redding, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Lisa Stengle, Executive Director, Planning and Evaluation
Arron Gregory, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING:

1. Call to Order

Ms. O’Grady called the meeting to order.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. **Citizen Comment on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items:**

Ms. O’Grady reviewed the speaker process for virtual meetings.

The following speakers addressed the Board:

¹ Video clips of regular School Board meetings can be viewed on the APS Web site at the following link:
<https://www.apsva.us/school-board-meetings/view-school-board-meetings/>
DVDs of all regular School Board meetings are also available for viewing in the School Board office.

Courtney Fox, parent: as the parent of a child with a health issue, sharing concerns about risks of COVID-19 and encouraging flexible, careful plans for returning to school that ensures the safety of all.

Geoff Olinde, Key parent: stressing the importance of opening schools as soon as possible, sharing concerns about the difficulties of virtual learning.

Paul Brickley, Yorktown parent: asking that a comprehensive plan be shared with families for reopening schools.

The following speakers addressed the Board sharing concerns about the lack of diversity at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, citing the APS policy on providing equitable and inclusive programs to students, and asking the Board to investigate and take corrective action or withdrawing from TJHSST:

Renee Randolph, Wakefield parent

Dr. Shantha Smith, Gunston parent

Dr. Lori Wiggins, Gunston Principal

Charles Randolph, Wakefield student

5. Announcements

- *August 25, 2020 School Board Policy Subcommittee Virtual Meeting, Noon*
- *August 27, 2020 Virtual Planning Work Session 6 PM*
- *September 3, 2020 Virtual Closed Meeting, 5:15 PM*
- *September 3, 2020 Virtual Work Session on the School Resource Officers and APS, 6:30 PM*

Board members made announcements concerning events and activities in Arlington, recognizing community members who have supported children and families with food, supplies and other support during the pandemic. Ms. O'Grady also presented an update on communications received by the Board.

5. Superintendent's Announcements and Updates

Dr. Durán provided a brief update on the Grab-and-Go Meal Services Update, and shared Back-to-School Information, including an update on school supplies and the online verification package for families, and highlighting activities for staff currently taking place during the pre-Service weeks. In closing, he confirmed that the theme for the year is Equity and Engagement.

Responding to questions, staff shared plans to assist families with completing the Annual Online Verification Process and the supplies that are being provided to students in the toolkits being distributed.

C. CONSENT AGENDA: (6:54 PM)

Ms. Van Doren moved to adopt the consent agenda as amended, seconded by Dr. Kanninen. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Mr.

Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O’Grady – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; and Ms. Van Doren – Aye. The following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:

1. Minutes:
 - a. April 16, 2020 School Board Meeting
 - b. April 21, 2020 Budget Work Session

2. Personnel Actions:

P/E-SCALE PERSONNEL
1 Appointment
5 Changes In Position/Salary

T-SCALE PERSONNEL
134 Appointments
15 Changes In Position/Salary
18 Resignations

A-SCALE PERSONNEL
9 Appointments
2 Changes In Position/Salary
1 Resignation
1 Retirement

3. Authorization of Signatures in the Absence of the Superintendent

4. Certification of APS Emergency Preparedness Management Plan

5. Grants and Restricted Programs:
 - a. Drew Summer Reading Program Grant

Ms. O’Grady announced that as part of consent, the Board appointed Cathy Lin as Director, Facilities and Operations; Kelley Hyner, Supervisor of the Arlington Tiered System Support; Elizabeth Walsh, Supervisor, Special Education; Maggie Hsu, Assistant Principal, Wakefield High School; and Miles Carey, Assistant Principal, Washington-Liberty High School.

D. MONITORING ITEMS: (7:03 PM)

1. Return to School Status Update

Recognizing the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, Dr. Durán presented an update on plans to prepare for the return to school. He shared metrics that inform decisions being made to ensure the health and safety of the students, staff and families. He also described plans for synchronous and asynchronous distance learning and enrollment processes for new families. He highlighted social-emotional learning priorities and lessons and supports being put in place. He also described how physical education and arts instruction will be provided, as well as instruction and supports for students with special needs, English Learners and gifted students. After describing parent academies and other training to help

families access instruction, Dr. Durán summarized efforts to provide childcare for staff and for families. Technology and meal service plans were also reviewed. In closing, he shared the financial projections resulting from the pandemic and how back-to-school plans will be communicated to families.

Board members appreciated the update and work that has been done, as well as the financial projections that were provided. Ms. Van Doren shared concerns from staff for follow up. Dr. Durán and ELT members responded to questions, providing additional information about technology and how support will be provided to students based on their needs and learning styles. Ms. Loft explained that lessons with new content will be recorded and available to all students as needed and spoke to how students will be assigned to teachers. The group briefly discussed ensuring that students have internet access, childcare, and translation of school materials.

2. Academic Update: (8:37 PM)

Noting that standardized testing, which informs the annual academic update, was not done during the pandemic, Ms. Loft presented data demonstrating student learning in the past year. She shared data on student enrollment in advanced placement and dual enrollment courses, as well as enrollment in IB courses. She also presented data on progress made by English Learners on language proficiency, and students who chose to improve their grades during the school closure in the spring. CTE Completer Credentialing Testing rate data, as well as Reading and Math Inventory data, were also reviewed. She described formative assessments and other tools used to assess learning and shared how this data will be used to plan for distance learning.

Responding to questions, Ms. Loft provided additional information about the CTE credentialing courses, and agreed to provide additional disaggregated data in future reports, particularly for English Learners, students with special needs, and economically disadvantaged students. The Board was also interested in more detail about how this data will be used to improve learning.

E. ACTION ITEMS: (9:16 PM)

1. Adoption of New School Board Policy A-30 Equity:

After reviewing the process followed to develop the policy, Mr. Gregory presented the proposed new equity policy. He also reviewed adjustments that were made to the policy after it was presented for information to the Board. He then described next steps to implement a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan.

Board members appreciated the all of the work by Mr. Gregory and many other staff and community members on this policy, and looked forward to work that will ensure equitable practices throughout the division. The Board also commented that the policy is a living document that will be refreshed and updated as needed. Ms. O'Grady confirmed that approving the policy is an important step that confirmed the APS commitment to equity, and thanked the Board for their support and efforts

in moving this policy forward. She reiterated that this work will continue and will evolve to ensure that all students' needs are met.

Ms. Talento moved that the Board approve our new Equity policy, School Board Policy A-30 Equity, seconded by Ms. Van Doren. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O’Grady – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; and Ms. Van Doren – Aye.

F. INFORMATION ITEMS: (9:37 PM)

1. Proposed New School Board Policy E-5.1.2 School Start Times:

Mr. Chadwick presented the proposed new policy that formalizes how school start times will be determined and the factors considered and methodology to be used to implement changes to start times if needed.

Responding to questions, Mr. Chadwick provided some background information on previous changes to school start times. Board members appreciated the presentation and looked forward to moving the policy forward.

2. Revised School Calendar: (9:37 PM)

Mr. Redding presented the proposed revision to the school calendar, which will eliminate early release Wednesdays that were included in the adopted school calendar. These changes will increase synchronous learning time during full distance learning, will balance seat time between groups when the in-person hybrid model is implemented, and will allow all students to learn and work asynchronously on Mondays while staff take part in professional learning.

Board members appreciated the proposed calendar adjustment and Ms. O’Grady confirmed it will come before the Board for action on September 10.

G. INFORMATION/ACTION ITEMS: (9:53 PM)

1. Temporary Waiver to Residency Distance in Policy J-5.3.30 Admissions:

Ms. Loft presented the proposed waiver that will allow students to continue to attend Arlington Public Schools even though they temporarily may not be able to reside in their homes within the normal residency distance due to unavoidable situations resulting from the pandemic.

Ms. Van Doren made the following motion:

Due to travel restrictions placed on the families of our existing APS students as a result of COVID-19, I move that the Arlington School Board waive the restriction that families who are temporarily displaced, as defined in the Children of Families with Special Circumstances section of Policy J-5.3.30 Admissions, must reside within 30 miles of Arlington and that approval of these special circumstances will be considered Administrative Placements. This waiver is effective through

December 31, 2020 at which point it will terminate. The Board will determine if an extension of the waiver is necessary at a December 2020 Board meeting.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Talento.

Mr. Goldstein asked for a clarification of using the designation of an administrative placement. Staff explained this recommendation and Dr. Durán spoke to the importance of having the Board act on this motion to avoid causing undue issues for any families. Board members appreciated staff's forward thinking to address this potential issue.

Ms. O'Grady called for a vote and the motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O'Grady – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; and Ms. Van Doren – Aye.

H. NEW BUSINESS: NONE

I. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Monique O'Grady, Chair
Arlington School Board